

Control malaria without DDT!

There are more options than currently used

»Examples in Africa demonstrate that it is possible to control malaria without using DDT.«

Dr. Abou Thiam, Director, PAN Africa, Senegal

»The use of DDT is a short-sighted response with long term consequences.«

Paul Saoko, Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Kenya



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Protect humanity and the environment from pesticides. Promote alternatives.

Better strategies for malaria control – beyond the chemical path

Insecticides currently used for malaria control carry risks to human health and the environment. PAN is calling for integrated malaria control based on social and ecological practices and drawing on local resources. These strategies will diversify malaria control methods and reduce reliance on pesticides.

Today, many programmes all over the world have successfully demonstrated the use of a holistic approach incorporating bioenvironmental control methods for malaria vector control (see also PAN Germany, 2009). The diagram »The spectrum of methods« shows the diversity of methods to combat malaria. Many tools exist both to control malaria and to attack the parasite at different stages of its life cycle. In addition to the common use of chemical and pharmaceutical interventions, non-chemical methods have been successful and include environmental management, non-chemical personal protection and biological control. These possibilities are frequently neglected even though they have proved their value for malaria control and appear to be safe to humans, environmentally sound, relatively cost-effective, locally available and sustainable in comparison to the widely-adopted chemical tools.

Combinations of interventions adapted to the local situation are a key to sustaining malaria control efforts. Effective non-pesticidal interventions begin with understanding the epidemiology of malaria, and this depends on a variety of factors: the biology and ecology of local vectors, the distribution and behaviour of people; and environmental conditions in the target areas. An analysis of the local situation is essential in order to develop a holistic strategy of interventions appropriate to conditions and vectors. These elements provide the basis for responsible authorities to reduce gradually the intensive use of pesticides, apply effective non-pesticidal interventions and finally to restrict the use of insecticides to emergencies.

Malaria is fundamentally a disease of poverty and it can be contained and reduced by investment in improving the local environment, educating populations in affected areas, and engaging communities in prevention strategies. A full programme for sustainable malaria control will require support for participation of communities in malarial areas, investment in technical capacity, and development of guidelines to inform and educate all the participants.

A holistic strategy must be designed with close attention to these local ecological, socio-economic, political and cultural factors. In this way, the living conditions and the general health of the people will be improved, while at the same time protecting the environment and the biodiversity, enabling sustainable development and contributing to rural development and poverty reduction.

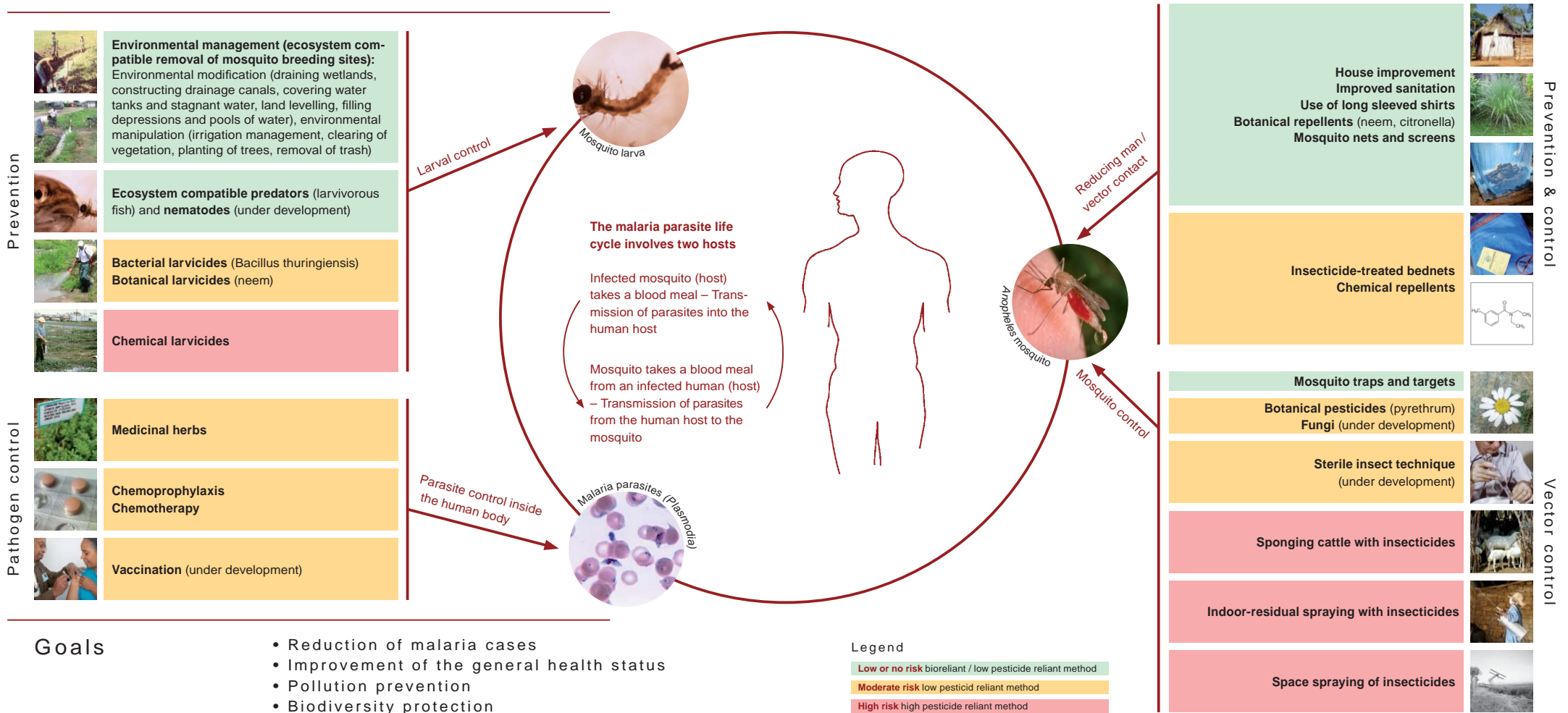
Keypoints of success for malaria control



- Awareness raising
- Health education

The spectrum of methods

- Combining multiple control interventions
- Adapting to the local situation
- Preferring bioreliant and low pesticide reliant tools



Goals

- Reduction of malaria cases
- Improvement of the general health status
- Pollution prevention
- Biodiversity protection



- Community participation



- Improvement of public health system



- Financial and technical support
- Support by local research



- Monitoring of the epidemiology, mosquitoes and parasites



- Good governance
- Decentralisation of control methods
- Local capacity building



- Regional cooperation
- Intersectoral collaboration
- Involvement of civil society organizations



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